

## How to Apply the Toolkit

The Toolkit provides techniques, case studies and potential regulatory approaches that can shift the pattern of development from sprawl to more compact centers with transportation choices and affordable housing coupled with surrounding protected open spaces.

If you are a developer or a site designer use the Toolkit to grow your business by producing sustainable developments that will prove profitable and improve your community's quality of life.

If you are an interested citizen, attend local meetings including Town Meeting, City Council meetings, Zoning Board of Appeal hearings, Planning Board hearings and Conservation Commission hearings. These public meetings are used to amend local regulations and permit development within your community. Active participation in these meetings can help to pass smart growth zoning codes and shape sustainable development.

Talk to your local Planning Board or Planning Department to find out if there are committees working on these issues. If not, start one!

## Smart Growth Toolkit Techniques

Transfer of Development Rights (TDR)

Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND)

Transit Oriented Development (TOD)

Open Space Residential Design (OSRD)

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU)

Agricultural Preservation

Low Impact Development (LID)

Inclusionary Zoning

District Improvement/  
Tax Increment Financing (DIF/TIF)

Chapter 40R

Reuse: Brownfields

Water Resource Management

MASSACHUSETTS SMART GROWTH

Toolkit



## Smart Growth Toolkit



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has developed the Smart Growth Toolkit. It is designed to provide assistance to municipalities, developers, site designers and interested citizens in improving land development patterns and in building sustainable communities. The Toolkit includes twelve smart growth techniques. Many techniques include case studies, model bylaws/ordinances, powerpoint slide shows and printable brochures. The Toolkit is available on CD and on the Commonwealth's website.



## What is Smart Growth?

Smart growth is a principle of land development that emphasizes mixing land uses, increases the availability of a range of housing types, takes advantage of compact design, fosters distinctive and attractive communities, and preserves open space, farmland, and critical environmental areas. Smart growth strengthens local economies, provides a variety of transportation choices, makes development decisions predictable, fair and cost effective, and encourages stakeholder collaboration in development decisions.

Smart growth is not “no-growth”. Growth is needed to keep Massachusetts economically and culturally vibrant. Currently about 25% of the Commonwealth is developed and 25% is permanently protected. The 50% of remaining land is at stake. Some of this land will be needed to accommodate new housing and businesses. However, we are consuming far more land than necessary to accommodate our growth needs. The smart growth techniques included in this Toolkit provide communities guidance on how to use and preserve the remaining land as efficiently as possible, while building vibrant and sustainable neighborhoods and communities.



## Smart Growth in Massachusetts

Attractive village and town centers, vibrant urban neighborhoods, historic mill buildings, and fields, forests, and streams characterize many parts of Massachusetts. These resources help define the character of our towns and cities. Revitalizing and reinforcing these areas is a key smart growth strategy. A major threat to these resources is sprawl, defined as low-density, single-use, and auto-dependent development. Local zoning, state and federal subsidies, and lack of coordinated planning have historically made sprawl the path of least resistance.

## The Costs of Sprawl

Sprawl is costly on many levels. Sprawling development requires significant and costly infrastructure investments to provide services such as roads, sewer, and water. When housing is located away from jobs and commercial centers, driving is often the only transportation option. According to the American Automobile Association the average cost of owning and operating a new car is now \$8,410 a year. For the young, old, and families without cars, this reliance on one form of transportation can become a huge burden. The amount of time people spend in their cars every year is significant and climbing. Housing diversity is another casualty of sprawl.

## The Commonwealth's Sustainable Development Principles

The state has worked hard to encourage planning and development that protects our natural resources, promotes social and economic health, and meets the needs of our residents. The Massachusetts Office for Commonwealth Development has identified 10 Sustainable Development Principles intended to guide growth. They are:

1. Redevelop First
2. Concentrate Development
3. Be Fair
4. Restore and Enhance the Environment
5. Conserve Natural Resources
6. Expand Housing Opportunities
7. Provide Transportation Choices
8. Increase Job Opportunities
9. Foster Sustainable Businesses
10. Plan Regionally

